

Amendments to the Specification are as follows:

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 24, line 19 and ending on page 25, line 13, as follows:

The atomic arrangement of each bias underlying layer 32 comprising a metal film comes close to that of the hcp-structure CoPt-system alloy constituting each hard bias layer 33 at the interface therebetween, and thus the CoPt-system alloy has a difficulty in forming a fcc structure but is easily formed in a hcp structure with. In this case, the c axis of the hcp structure is preferentially oriented within the boundary surface between the CoPt-system alloy and each of the bias underlying layers 32. Since the hcp structure produces large magnetic anisotropy in the c-axis direction as compared with the fcc structure, the coercive force H_c when a magnetic field is applied to the hard bias layers 33 increases. Furthermore, the c axis of the hcp structure is preferentially oriented within the boundary surface between the CoPt-system alloy and each of the bias underlying layers 32, and thus residual magnetization increases to increase the remanence ratio S determined by residual magnetization/saturation magnetic flux density. As a result, the characteristics of the hard bias layers 33 can be improved to increase a bias magnetic field produced from each of the hard bias layers 33. The metal film having a body-centered cubic crystal structure (bcc) is preferably composed of at least one element of Cr, W, Mo, V, Mn, Nb, and Ta.

Please amend the paragraph on page 28, line 8, as follows:

The first and second magnetic layers 53 and 55 are ferromagnetically coupled with each other by a method of bringing the first and second magnetic layers 53 and 55 into direct contact through a small hole or groove formed in the current limiting layer 54, or a topological coupling method.